2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

462 required in making their various weapons, utensils, &c.; but though he has no hesitation in sharing and lightening his wife's labours up to this point, it is only in cases of stern necessity that he will condescend to procure either wood or water for the family requirements; the supply of these essentials of daily life being considered as peculiarly feminine duties and derogatory to the lords of creation.

3. Every woman is supposed to be a proficient in shaving,[1] tattooing,[2] and scarifying; she has also to prepare the *kòi·ob-*, *tâ·la-ōg-*, and *kâ·ngatâ-būj-*,[3] which are needed on so many occasions. The erection of the *chàng-dar·anga-*,[4] and the manufacture of personal ornaments,[5] and various other objects in constant use,[6] is also confined to the fair (!) sex, and when to these are added their daily duties of procuring certain kinds of food, cooking, and providing the water and fuel required for the family, it will be seen that the Andamanese materfamilias—who has not several children old enough to give her material assistance—has her time fully employed, or at least sufficiently so to prevent her getting into much mischief.

461 4. It is the duty of those men and women who remain at home to attend to the sick, infants, and others who are in a dependent position, to look after the fires in the various huts, and, of course, if needs be, to protect the property of absentees: for all those who are not physically incapable are supposed to employ themselves in some way, either for their own benefit or that of the community to which they belong.

574 251 5. It is customary for every family to maintain a supply of provisions in excess of its own requirements for the use of friends who may chance to visit the encampment; but in the storage of their food—owing probably to the ease with which it is generally procured—much is often wasted which might without difficulty be preserved. The seeds of the *Artocarpus chaplasha*, and of a species of *Semecarpus*, are alone kept for any length of time. The manner in which this is effected will be described in the section treating of "Food."[7]

462 562 484 6. Migrations and other events affecting the movements of a whole community are arranged by the chief and elders; women in such matters are not consulted, though while on the march it is they who are expected to carry the heaviest loads: this

[1] *Vide ante* "Hair," paragraph 4, and *post* "Shaving," paragraph 2.
[2] *Vide post* "Tattooing," paragraph 2.
[3] *Vide* Appendix B, items 60, 58, 62.
[4] *Vide ante* "Habitations," paragraph 4.
[5] *Vide post* "Attire," paragraph 1.
[6] In Appendix B will be found detailed the various objects manufactured by both men and women.
[7] *Vide post* "Food," paragraph 32.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

arises from no want of consideration for the weaker vessel, but simply because, if unnecessarily encumbered, the men would be unable to shoot or pursue any animal which might cross their path.

7. Such training as the children receive is undertaken by their parents or guardians; in the case of boys it consists merely in providing them with miniature weapons suitable to their age, and instructing them in their use: as they advance in years they accompany the men in their hunting and fishing expeditions, and, being by nature intelligent and emulous, they speedily acquire sufficient skill to enable them to afford material assistance to their elders.

8. The girls, similarly, are taught by their mothers, or other female guardians, how to fulfil the various duties which are regarded as essentially pertaining to their sex, and which I have described in the foregoing.

9. It seems hardly necessary to add that the unnatural custom of infanticide is unknown to the Andamanese,[1] and though the mortality among infants is excessive,[2] it is traceable to no want of affection, but to the injudicious treatment and lavish attentions bestowed upon the little ones by their ignorant though well-intentioned elders.[3]

10. For the better security of their babies, when travelling, women are in the habit of hanging round their necks a string the ends of which have been previously fastened to the infant's wrists; the child being then placed in a *chīp-*,[4] cannot by any accident meet with a serious fall.

Attire.—1. Madame de Staël speaks of certain children being "*vêtu du climât:*" the same expressive remark may be applied to the Andamanese, for no clothing, as we understand the word, is worn by either sex; there are, however, certain so-called ornamental circlets, garters, bracelets, cinctures, and necklaces of bones,[5] wood, or shell, which are its substitute[6] and serve to

[1] The birth of a girl is usually as gratifying to the parents as that of a boy.

[2] *Vide ante* "Reproduction," paragraph 4.

[3] Dr. Day has correctly stated that "men and women seem equally fond of carrying the babies about; all pet them; when they cry for anything, they give it; and over-kindness early consigns the little one to the grave."

[4] *Vide* Appendix B, item 24.

[5] As far as we at present know, the *jārawa-* do not wear necklaces of bone, or the skulls of their deceased relatives. The males of this tribe wear round their heads, waists, knees, and arms, fringes of string attached to a cord or cane, which are called by the *.bō·jig-ngīyi-*, *bĕ·ria-* (*vide* Plate IX, figs. 13, 13*a*, 13*b*).

[6] The relatives of a deceased person will commonly wear such of the ornaments as are in good condition, "in memoriam;" this is not, however, a distinguishing peculiarity, or one confined to savages.

3: Temple G-5 (1901) 1903 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

PART I.

THE ANDAMANESE.

CHAPTER I.

THE CENSUS.

Conditions of Census-taking—Impossibility of Synchronous Census—Intelligent Assistance from Aborigines impossible—Hostile Tribes estimated only—Control of Operations—Census Tours—Method of Enumeration—Officers' Diaries—Method of estimating Onges and Jarawas—Attitude of the Andamanese—Points as to Defects in Enumeration—Jarawa Hostility—The Returns of the Andamanese—The former Population—Diagram of Past and Present Assumed Density—Methods of arriving at Former Density—The Kitchen-Middens—Future Prospects of the Race.

619 H84

Conditions of Census-taking.—The conditions under which a Census of the Andamanese was attempted were the following. In the first place there are Andamanese "Homes" in the Penal Settlement maintained by the Government, to which any Andamanese of any Tribe may come and stay as long as he chooses. In the next place, for reasons hereafter to be explained, practically all the tribes but one are "friendly" and are at the present time very much mixed up with each other. In this mixed condition they are nomads, much given to rapid wandering all over the islands of the group known as the Great Andaman, in which the Penal Settlement is situated. In their most imperfect condition of civilisation it was quite hopeless to expect to induce them to remain in any one place for even one night or for any given period. And thus the first great difficulty to combat in attempting to enumerate them was to prevent the same persons from being counted twice or more times over.

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Impossibility of Synchronous Census.—This difficulty was increased by the impossibility, owing to the nature of the country they inhabit, from enumerating the people all at once or at anything approaching a uniform time. As will be seen later on, the Andamans consist of the Great Andaman group and the Little Andaman, attached to each of which are a great number of smaller islands and islets. There is also the inhabited North Sentinel at some distance to the west of the general group. The Great Andaman consists of five main islands running from north to south thus:—North Andaman, Middle Andaman, Baratang, South Andaman, Rutland Island. All these are dove-tailed into each other by very narrow straits, not so wide as the ordinary rivers of a continent. The Little Andaman is situated at a considerable distance to the south. All round the Great Andaman are islands of every size; to the east is Ritchie's Archipelago and to the west are the Labyrinth Islands. Every single island of the whole group is covered with a hilly jungle, the denseness of which must be seen to be appreciated, and passable only to its indigenous inhabitants. It is therefore impossible without much preparation and expense to traverse the interior of the islands, but happily it is quite easy to move about the deeply indented coasts, containing more harbours and snug anchorages than the whole Indian Peninsula. The length of the Great Andaman group is 156 miles: its average width is 9 to 10 miles and with the outlying islands some 25 miles. Two distant islands, Narcondam and Barren Island, to the east are also included in the Andaman group, but they are both uninhabited. It was, therefore, necessary to go over this area by coasting voyages, to stop at likely spots for encampments and to hunt about for the nomadic inhabitants of the neighbourhood: a work requiring much local knowledge, personal judgment and patience.

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Intelligent Assistance from Aborigines impossible.—From the nature of the case it will be understood that very little reliance could be placed on the people themselves for assistance in the enumeration. Their inveterate, indeed necessary, habits of wandering, their childlike incapacity for responsibility of

10: Sen. K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Negritos

mans. They live in the North Sentinel island and Portman had only made a few observations in the abandoned settlement of these aborigines. In 1886, Portman contacted a few Sentinelese with the help of a few Onges. The affinity of the Sentinelese with the Onges have been detected but the language of the Sentinelese is different from the Onges. However, only later researches can reveal more facts about their lives.

PRESENT DAY DISTRIBUTION OF THE ABORIGINAL POPULATION

The islands, though remained essentially a land of the aborigines, have a present day distribution which is very much discrete in nature. The nature of the distribution was very likely much more widespread in different parts of the islands but the great decline in their number coupled with gradual expansion of the area of the later settlers led to a continued recession of the aborigines in the more desolate areas. Thus there has been a great shrinkage in the territory of the aborigines of the South Andaman where no settlements of any importance had developed.

There are only a few Andamanese (23) who are still now surviving in the Middle and North Andamans and they live in the huts built up by the Forest Department.

The exact areas of inhabitation of the Jarawas are anybody's guess. Though the Jarawas have suffered a considerable decline in their number, no evidences of their distribution beyond the South Andaman are in view. Living under the cold patronage and hostility of the neighbours, the *Aka-beas*, a sub-group of the Andamanese, the Jarawas were always subjected to all their efforts of territorial expansion. Though their exact areas of distribution have not been traced so far, it is probable that they live in the dense forests of the South Andaman, especially in the least disturbed and unhaunted forest areas of the west. However, their biggest concentration is believed to be between Port Constance, Port Meadows and Shaol Bay.

The Sentinelese inhabit the North Sentinel Island and only further exploration in the island can furnish an idea about their exact spots of distribution.

The most predominant in number are the Onges who inhabit the island of Little Andaman. However they make occasional voyages to the Rutland and Cinque Island where some of them live. The areas of distribution of the Onges in Little Andaman are mainly in the coastal areas of the northeast, south and west and also in the interior.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

the Onges as hiding-places or temporary shelters. In these cavities, which remain full of water right through the dry season, flourish a horde of amphibia, many hitherto unknown.

The great trees are sometimes so close together that it is literally impossible to pass between them, yet it is rare to find two of the same species next to each other, so great is the variety. Huge clumps of ferns are everywhere, hiding the roots of dying trees, hundreds of years old, and fallen trunks rotting on the ground. Some of the thicker and taller trees protect themselves from the monsoon gales by developing buttresses, usually four or six to a tree, which stand out from the trunk like right-angled triangles, with the apex about ten metres from the ground. If a blanket is stretched between the sloping sides of two of the buttresses one can improvise a shelter which is extremely comfortable by local standards, and both man and animals take advantage of this natural cover; I myself took shelter like this on many occasions. (They need to be treated with caution, however, as the local snakes have a predilection for siestas in the darkest corners.) If a hard piece of wood is struck against one of the buttresses it echoes hollowly, and the Andamanese often make use of them to transmit warning messages over considerable distances, using a form of code. A few beats can make every inhabitant within a wide radius vanish from sight, hastily making for the nearest hiding-place. It is hopeless to try and ferret them out once they have been warned, and there is always a risk of being killed by one of their arrows in the process.

Sometimes the Onges used to disappear suddenly for fun. The blackness of their skin is a great help in this, since even on the brightest afternoon it is intensified by the obscurity of the forest. One has a disturbing sensation of being entirely alone, yet knowing that dozens of pairs of eyes are watching as the Onges glide silently from trunk to trunk between the buttresses.

The whole island is a mass of knotted vegetation, and it is useless to attempt to cut any form of lasting path, as the plants immediately grow back. *'Walking'* in the Andamans therefore means opening up a way with a hatchet, unless one adopts the rapid but exhausting Onge method of swinging over obstacles by the lianas. This is the kingdom of the epiphytes. The lianas cover their hosts as if determined to hide them, and clumps of orchids hang from nearly every trunk, although their flowers are unfortunately very small.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

Owing to the difficulty of pushing through the undergrowth the Onges always travel in single file, following closely behind one another, the men first, then the women and children, with the dogs following all round. They never travel alone; I hardly ever met any by themselves, but always in groups of families or groups of hunters. The man who happens to be at the front of the file is the guide and when they come to an awkward part of the journey – perhaps across a deep river – everybody helps. Trees are felled to fall across between the banks and a rope of lianas is run across to make the crossing easier for the aged, the women and the children, though their sense of balance is so good that most of them manage without it, even when carrying heavy loads across a single trunk.

The Onges are now nearly all related to each other in some way. They all know each other, and the contacts are usually friendly. The few squabbles which I saw, always over game, or food that had been gathered, all blew over very quickly; normally, especially in the dry season when every group becomes nomadic in search of food, everyone went freely all over the island. On the occasions of the great hunts, or the honey feasts, a number of groups would band together for the occasion and even then they tried to divide the spoils equally and peaceably. If a dispute does arise the camp will break up into factions, but these will still keep close to each other and after a short while their differences will be made up with the usual long and tearful embraces. These scenes of reconciliation may go on for days, all starting from nothing more serious than a difference of opinion over the division of game captured by communal effort!

Much more important than the danger of offending other human beings is that of causing offence to the spirits of the dead or the guardian spirits who provide food. There is, as I have said, not overmuch rigidity in their observations – no propitiatory offerings of any kind are made to the spirits. The supreme being, Eiuga, who takes the shape of a lizard bigger than a crocodile, they know well. On Great Andaman he becomes Puluga, equally powerful, lord of men and things but rather more anthropomorphic than his counterpart in Little Andaman. As Eiuga lives in the sky, the thunder is his voice, and the wind his breath; if he is angry he breathes out storms and throws burning tree-trunks down to the earth, setting light to the forest. Behind Eiuga are a series of minor spirits who

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

two have added feathers, and poisoned tips, in imitation of neighbouring peoples.

For the capture of large fish and animals such as turtles, dolphins and dugong, the Onges and Arioto use not the arrow harpoon but the spear harpoon. Brown saw none of these among the Onges he studied in Rutland, and consequently assumed its absence on Little Andaman. The Onges carry as little as possible on their sea voyages for the sake of speed, and would not therefore take spear harpoons (used only for marine hunting) with them on trips to Rutland, which they visit only for the purpose of hunting pigs and not to fish, or to hunt marine animals. They certainly have, and use, spear harpoons even today; I myself have been with the Onges and seen their harpoons used from the canoes. I had ample opportunity to admire both the effectiveness of the weapons and the accuracy of the throwers.

The greater structural and operational simplicity of the spear harpoon, in comparison with the arrow harpoon, leads one to suppose it the older of the two. Its cord is made of tough *Hibiscus* fibres, and with the aid of these and a straight shaft about six metres long and little over four centimetres in diameter, even the humblest of nails, seven centimetres long and three millimetres in diameter, can become the point of a spear harpoon. It is fixed into the shaft (usually of mangrove wood) which is hollowed out at the thinner end to take it, and with a cord up to a hundred metres long or more attached to the nail two centimetres from the head, the spear harpoon is ready for use – shaft, point and cord.

When the harpoon is to be used for turtles, no barbs are needed, as the point is driven so firmly into the shell that blocks of wood have to be carried in the canoes to knock it out for re-use.

The harpoon throwers stand ready on the platform jutting out fore and aft of the canoes (see p. 122), the free end of the cord is tied to one of the booms to prevent it being jerked out of the canoe as the victim tries to escape, and the slack is coiled in the bottom of the canoe. The thrower holds the cord against the harpoon as he waits for the right moment and then throws. As the harpoon strikes, the point detaches from the shaft, which floats on the water till picked up – often to be used as a punt-pole in the shallow waters of the coral reefs as the canoe follows the victim, now held firmly on the end of the cord.

All the evidence points to this being far more than mere supposition and even today the Onges persist in their tendency to expand towards the north. In 1953 I could find no trace of a number of Onges whom I had known in 1952; the others told me they were all 'dead', but it seems probable that they had migrated to the islands further north. And in 1954 nearly all the canoes belonging to the communal huts in the south-west of Little Andaman, which I had seen in 1953, had vanished and were said to have gone with the 'dead'. It is probable that they too had migrated to Great Andaman, becoming 'Jarawas'.

This is physically quite possible. Between Little Andaman and Great Andaman the Onges have a line of transit camps, still in use, where food and water are easily available. All have a name, and I followed the line myself. With the help of their fragile but very fast canoes, and without carrying food or water (which they know will be available at the next transit camp), they can travel very quickly. They take fire with them in the canoes in the form of a burning torch and while they are at sea, unlike the lazy pace of their normal attitude to life, they seem possessed by the desire to reach the next stopping point on terra firma.

Moreover, one may deduce from the fact that the names of these transit camps are all in the Onge language that the migrations have always been from south to north. Little Andaman, formed as it is mainly of coral banks and only projecting a short way above the sea, disappears from view in the tropical mists a few kilometres from the shore; from Rutland it is invisible, and as the Andamanese only travel by sea with land in sight or when its existence and direction is well known, no one from the north would have dared to travel south into the unknown.

We have already seen that the ignorance of the present-day Jarawas as regards the sea is no bar to a hypothesis of their original arrival in Great Andaman by sea. Colebrook, a hundred and fifty years ago, actually saw them with canoes, and Gilbert Rogers[1] recorded seeing canoes on the coasts of North Sentinel very similar to those of the Onges today. The accumulation, therefore, of this evidence and the general similarity of culture throughout the archipelago all adds up to inescapable conclusions.

Even the unique dances enjoyed by the Onges are to be seen

[1] *Andaman and Nicobar Gazetteer*, 2 January 1904.

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

type of canoe is the only craft seen. I saw some hauled up on the beach, identical with the ones I had seen the Onges building, even to the *Nautilus* shell as a baler. In face of this and other evidence there can be little doubt that the people of North Sentinel are descended from the Onges, possibly driven off course by some storm, and then isolated on the island.

The Arioto, copying Indian and Burmese craft, have in recent times come to modify the original canoe somewhat, deepening the gunwales and doing away with the float. The result is a craft which though it remains small is unlikely to fill with water in heavy seas. But even the Arioto prefer the single outrigger canoe for sea voyages.

The only real seafarers, however, are the Onges, who make regular hunting trips as far as Rutland. In the past they sometimes made devastating raids as far as Car, but these have died out over the past hundred years as their numbers have dwindled. There is certainly no doubt that at one time the Onges undertook considerable sea voyages in canoes the same as they build today.

The work involved in the building of these canoes is, as I have said, enormous. The preparatory work on the tree, and then the felling, are hard enough without proper equipment. I gave my Onge friends some long-handled wood-cutter's axes, to help in this part of the work. In their enthusiasm they chopped so hard they soon broke the handles and chipped some of the tempered blades, so that I had to take them to Port Blair for repair! But the real work begins with the working of the felled trunk. Then a small and very crude form of hatchet[1] has to be used, flaking off small strips like a plane; fire is never used to assist in the process. Fortunately the *Sterculia* wood usually chosen is soft.

The original shape is not touched after the required length, calculated so as to allow for the harpoon-thrower's platform at each end, has been cut. The irregularities of the trunk are left intact, so that the canoes look distorted and even ugly despite their seaworthiness. During the preliminary stage of stripping the bark great care is taken not to chip the outer ring of wood immediately below the bark; this is smooth and fine-grained, and more waterproof than the inner layers. One danger is that as the wood dries

[1] The blades used to be made from *Tridacna* shell, but in more recent times they have come to be made of iron from wrecked ships cast up on the beaches.

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485 TRAVEL SERVICES--accommodations (e.g., hotels, inns, guest houses); information and travelers' aid services; guides; ticket and travel agencies; organizations of and for travelers (e.g., automobile clubs); etc. See also:

Restaurants 265
Foreign exchange 487
Highway services 496

11: Cipriani E-3 (1951-1955) 1966 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

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